

Exhibit A

Michigan Court of Appeals



2014
Annual
Report

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Introduction



The Michigan Court of Appeals was created by the Constitution of 1963, art 6, § 1, and began operation in 1965 with a bench of nine judges. The Legislature increased the size of the bench several times in subsequent years and by 1993 the Court was comprised of 28 judges. In 2012, legislation was enacted that will eventually reduce the Court's size to 24 judges through attrition. The Court is divided into four geographic districts for election purposes and has office locations in each of those districts: Detroit (District I), Troy (District II), Grand Rapids (District III), and Lansing (District IV).

In addition to the judges, approximately 170 employees work in the Court's Judicial Chambers, Clerk's Office, Research Division, Information Systems Department, Finance Office, and Security Department. By contrast, the Court employed roughly 228 employees ten years earlier. While the work force is 25% smaller, the hard work, innovation, and productivity of the judges and staff have allowed the Court to thrive and be recognized as a leader in court management.

The Court takes seriously its mandate "to secure the just, speedy, and economical determination of every action and to avoid the consequences of error that does not affect the substantial rights of the parties." MCR 1.105. To effectuate that goal, the judges and staff continually focus on improving the speed at which cases move through the Court; providing accessible, transparent operations; and delivering high quality judicial decisions.

As detailed in this report, 2014 was a very successful year for the Court, as shown by the remarkable 108% clearance rate for the year and by the fact that the Court issued over 500 more opinion dispositions in 2014 than it did the previous year. A large measure of the Court's success this year, and over the last five years, is directly attributable to the efforts of the Court's Chief Judge during that period, William B. Murphy. Under Chief Judge Murphy's steady leadership from 2009 through 2014, the Court has been able to stabilize its operations through several lean budget years, maintain its delay-reduction achievements, and garner national recognition as a leader in court management. Judge Murphy is well deserving of our gratitude for his guidance these past several years and for his long, distinguished tenure on the Court of Appeals bench.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the judges and staff of the Court over the past year in making significant progress toward our common goals. In particular, on behalf of the judges of the Court, I offer thanks and best regards to two of our esteemed colleagues who retired at the end of 2014. Judge William C. Whitbeck served the Court for 17 years, with six years as Chief Judge, before retiring in November of 2014. As Chief Judge of the Court, Judge Whitbeck was the driving force behind the Court's efforts to reduce delay and he achieved dramatic, lasting results in that area. Judge E. Thomas Fitzgerald concluded his 24 years of distinguished service to the Court at the close of 2014. Judge Fitzgerald was a workhorse for the Court, with unfailing good cheer, he routinely volunteered for extra assignments and committee work. The high standards and collegiality of these two preeminent judges will be missed.

—Chief Judge Michael J. Talbot

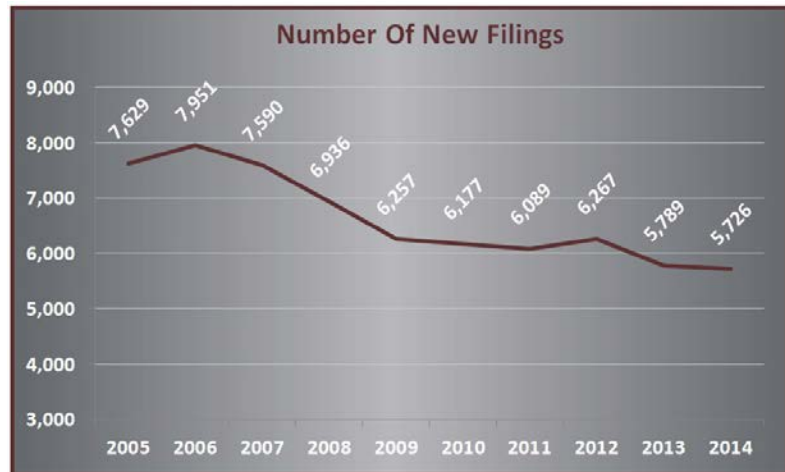
Court Performance

New Filings

The Court of Appeals received 5,726 new case filings in 2014. This was a slight decrease from 2013 and continued a general downward trend in filings on the order of 1%-3% in the past few years. At right, the graph depicts the volume of new filings with the Court over the past ten years.

Appeals by right made up about 51% of new filings in 2014, while 47% were discretionary appeals, and 2% were “other” case initiations (e.g., original actions). Roughly 52% of the cases were civil and 48% were criminal.

Appeals from civil cases encompass family matters, including termination of parental rights and child custody, as well as personal injury, probate, tax, and appeals from agency decisions. The chart on the right identifies the approximate share of the Court of Appeals’ civil caseload in 2014 for some of the various case types.



Type of Civil Appeal	% of All Civil Appeals
Agency Appeal	2.5%
Contracts	8.4%
Divorce w/ minor children	6.2%
Divorce w/o minor children	1.2%
Housing & Real Estate	5.4%
Medical Malpractice	3.8%
No-Fault Auto Insurance	4.8%
Personal Injury Automobile	5.1%
Professional Malpractice	1.0%
Personal Injury	5.5%
Termination of Parental Rights	14.5%